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EXAMINER
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MADAMBA, GLENFORD J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2151

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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06/05/2007

ELECTRONIC

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/777,655

**Applicant(s)**

JEON, YOUNG JAE

**Examiner**

Glenford Madamba

**Art Unit**

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 March 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 7-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                       |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Remarks and Amendments***

1. This action is in response to remarks and claim amendments filed by Applicant's representative on March 15, 2007.
2. Applicant's remarks and amendments filed on March 15, 2007 have been considered but are now moot in light of the new grounds of rejection provided with this action.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1, 3, 4-5, 9, 12, 15, 18-23, 25-26, and 28-29, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyers, U.S. Patent US 6,430, 629 in view of Sitnik, U.S. Patent 6,988,276.

As per Claims 1, 9, and 15, Smyers in view of Sitnik discloses a home network system [Abstract] [Figure 1] comprising:

at least one slave device (110-140) [Fig. 1]; and

a television receiver (e.g., home network monitor\_10) [Fig. 1] operatively

connected to the *at least one* slave device, the master device comprising:

a microprocessor (CPU\_20) [Fig. 1] operatively connected to the *at least one* slave device for repeatedly sending a status request signal to the slave device and receiving one or more response signals from the *at least one* slave device [Abstract] [col 2, L9-12];

a memory coupled to the microprocessor (30 /40) [Figure 1] for constructing an operation history database (e.g. log of nodal operation state or state changes) [col 2, L47 – col 3, L7] by *cumulatively* storing operation status data (e.g. temperature readings, VCR program recordings) of the *at least one* slave device included in each response signal [col 1, L5-30] [col 2, L47 – col 3, L7], wherein the microprocessor extracts data from the operation history database when a history inquiry request is received from a user [col 3, L1-20]; and

a display unit (User Interface\_160 w/ touchscreen; e.g., computer, PDA) coupled to the microprocessor for displaying the extracted operation history data [Figure 1],

wherein the operation status data includes data related to specific functions performed by the at least one slave device (e.g. temperature readings, VCR program recordings) [Abstract] [col 1, L5-30] [col 2, L47 – col 3, L7].

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention, as above, and in particular a master device (e.g., home network monitor\_10) [Fig. 1] operatively connected to at least one slave device (110-140) [Fig. 1] in a home network system, he does not expressly disclose the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a “television receiver”. The feature is disclosed by Sitnik in a related endeavor.

Sitnik discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for providing peer-to-peer communications between televisions wherein a query request is sent from any of the televisions to any other of the television. The query request is for information identifying content currently watched on the queried television including samples of the currently watched content [Abstract]. Specifically, Sitnik expressly discloses the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a “television receiver” [col 1, L25-36]. Sitnik teaches that “manufacturers are currently retrofitting every type of home appliance, from toasters to heating and cooling systems, for connection to an *in-home network*. Most of the systems are designed with *master/slave operability* in mind. For instance, many systems are designed wherein a master controller, such as a television (TV) is provided with the capability to recognize and control a slave device, such as a video cassette recorder (VCR). In this model, the master sends command

and control information to the slave and the slave complies with the commands and sends status information back to the master.

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention with the recited feature of the home network system comprising a television receiver that is operatively connected to at least one slave device for sending status request signals and receiving one or more response signals from the at least one slave device, for the motivation of sharing information about viewed audio visual content, specifically, and enhancing the primary leisure function of a TV, in general [col 1, L5-9 & col 2, L5-7].

Claim 9 and 15 are also thus rejected using the same rationale discussed above for Claim 1 as the claims differ only by their statutory category.

As per Claim 3, Smyers discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by *the* slave device during a predetermined period of time (e.g. monitoring of temperature readings every 30 minutes, monitoring of STB / VCR states performed every 5 minutes) [col 2, L23-47]

As per Claim 4, Smyers discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user *includes a user selection of a period of time*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events

performed by *each of the at least one slave device* during the selected period of time (e.g. monitoring of temperature readings by a temperature sensitive device every 30 minutes, monitoring of STB / VCR states performed every 5 minutes) [col 2, L23-47].

As per Claims 5, 19, and 20 Smyers discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes information indicating initiation or completion of an operation and a corresponding time of the initiation or completion [col 2, L48-55].

Claims 19, and 20 are also rejected using the same justification provided for Claim 5 as they cite the same claim limitations as Claim 5.

As per Claim 12, 22 and 23, Smyers discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes *a user selection of at least one slave device*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed *by each selected slave device* during a predetermined period of time (e.g. monitoring of temperature readings by a temperature sensitive device every 30 minutes, monitoring of STB / VCR states performed every 5 minutes) [col 2, L23-47].

As per Claim 18, Smyers discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes data indicating a current operation status of a slave device [Abstract] [col 1, L5-28].

As per Claim 21, Smyers discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes information indicating that there is no operation in progress [col 2, lines 47-65].

As per Claim 25, Smyers in view of Sitnik discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the user manually makes the history inquiry request by activating a corresponding function key provided within the television receiver.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention, as above, and in particular a master device (e.g., home network monitor\_10) [Fig. 1] operatively connected to at least one slave device (110-140) [Fig. 1] in a home network system, and the method wherein the user manually makes the history inquiry request by activating a corresponding function key provided within a master device [col 3, L8-20], he does not expressly disclose the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a "television receiver". The feature is disclosed by Sitnik in a related endeavor.

Sitnik discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for providing peer-to-peer communications between televisions wherein a query request is sent from any of



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the televisions to any other of the television. The query request is for information identifying content currently watched on the queried television including samples of the currently watched content [Abstract]. Specifically, Sitnik expressly discloses the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a "television receiver" [col 1, L25-36]. Sitnik teaches that "manufacturers are currently retrofitting every type of home appliance, from toasters to heating and cooling systems, for connection to an *in-home network*. Most of the systems are designed with *master/slave operability* in mind. For instance, many systems are designed wherein a master controller, such as a television (TV) is provided with the capability to recognize and control a slave device, such as a video cassette recorder (VCR). In this model, the master sends command and control information to the slave and the slave complies with the commands and sends status information back to the master.

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention with the recited feature of the home network system comprising a television receiver that is operatively connected to at least one slave device for sending status request signals and receiving one or more response signals from the at least one slave device, for the motivation of sharing information about viewed audio visual content, specifically, and enhancing the primary leisure function of a TV, in general [col 1, L5-9 & col 2, L5-7].

As per Claim 26, Smyers discloses the method of claim 15, wherein sending one status request signals to the plurality of slave devices is performed repeatedly (e.g. monitoring

of temperature readings by a temperature sensitive device every 30 minutes, monitoring of STB / VCR states performed every 5 minutes) [col 2, L23-47].

As per Claims 28, 29, and 31 Smyers in view of Sitnik discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the at least one slave device is configured to respond to the status request signal from the television receiver by sending to the television receiver the response signal that indicates that the at least one slave device is idle (VCR 'recording', 'not recording', recording completed') [Abstract] [col 1, L5-28] [col 2, L48-55].

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention, as above, and in particular a master device (e.g., home network monitor\_10) [Fig. 1] operatively connected to at least one slave device (110-140) [Fig. 1] in a home network system, and the the home network system wherein the at least one slave device is configured to respond to the status request signal from the master device by sending to the master device the response signal that indicates that the at least one slave device is idle (VCR 'recording', 'not recording', recording completed') [Abstract] [col 1, L5-28] [col 2, L48-55], he does not expressly disclose the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a "television receiver". The feature is disclosed by Sitnik in a related endeavor.

Sitnik discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for providing peer-to-peer communications between televisions wherein a query request is sent from any of

the televisions to any other of the television. The query request is for information identifying content currently watched on the queried television including samples of the currently watched content [Abstract]. Specifically, Sitnik expressly discloses the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a "television receiver" [col 1, L25-36]. Sitnik teaches that "manufacturers are currently retrofitting every type of home appliance, from toasters to heating and cooling systems, for connection to an *in-home network*. Most of the systems are designed with *master/slave operability* in mind. For instance, many systems are designed wherein a master controller, such as a television (TV) is provided with the capability to recognize and control a slave device, such as a video cassette recorder (VCR). In this model, the master sends command and control information to the slave and the slave complies with the commands and sends status information back to the master.

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention with the recited feature of the home network system comprising a television receiver that is operatively connected to at least one slave device for sending status request signals and receiving one or more response signals from the at least one slave device, for the motivation of sharing information about viewed audio visual content, specifically, and enhancing the primary leisure function of a TV, in general [col 1, L5-9 & col 2, L5-7].

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2. Claims 2, 11, 13, 16, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyers in view of Dara-Abrams et al (hereinafter Dara-Abrams), U.S. Patent 6826512.

As per Claims 2 and 16, Smyers in view of Dara-Abrams discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the microprocessor identifies the at least one slave device by checking *an identification (ID) of the at least one slave device*.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract], he does not expressly disclose the feature of the system wherein the microprocessor identifies the at least one slave device by checking *an identification (ID) of the at least one slave device*. The feature is disclosed by Dara-Abrams in a related endeavor.

Dara-Abrams discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for diagnosing consumer electronic devices (PCs, TVs, PVRs, STBs, DVRs, PDAs, game devices, etc.) [Abstract] [col 1, L14-22] [col 2, L35-36]. In one embodiment, when a problem with a consumer device owned by a user is identified, a diagnostic procedure is provided to control the diagnosis of the potentially faulty consumer electronic device by a testing consumer electronic device. In particular, Dara-Abrams discloses as part of his invention that upon receiving a request for a support service application, server\_22 selects the requested service application from the database\_24 using *device identifying*

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*information* (e.g. the vendor, model number and serial number of the device) included in the request [col 3, L46-50].

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyer's invention with the feature of the system wherein the microprocessor identifies the at least one slave device by checking *an identification (ID) of the at least one slave device*, as disclosed by Dara-Abrams, for the motivation of providing a mechanism for diagnosing consumer electronic devices locally, thus eliminating a need to find a service center associated with the faulty device [col 1, L42-45].

As per Claims 11 and 17, Smyers in view of Dara-Abrams discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by one or more of the plurality of *slave devices* during a predetermined period of time.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal operational state changes), he does not expressly disclose the feature of the television (TV) receiver. The feature is disclosed by Dara-Abrams in a related endeavor.

Dara-Abrams discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for diagnosing consumer electronic devices (PCs, TVs, PVRs, STBs, DVRs, PDAs, game devices, etc.) [Abstract] [col 1, L14-22] [col 2, L35-36]. In one embodiment, when a problem with a consumer device owned by a user is identified, a diagnostic procedure is provided to control the diagnosis of the potentially faulty consumer electronic device by a testing consumer electronic device. In particular, Dara-Abrams discloses as part of his invention gateway device\_14 (e.g., PC, laptop, PDA, etc.), which may be coupled to a display device\_42, such as a television [col 3, L51-60].

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyer's invention with the feature of the television (TV) receiver, as disclosed by Dara-Abrams, for the motivation of providing a mechanism for diagnosing consumer electronic devices locally, thus eliminating a need to find a service center associated with the faulty device [col 1, L42-45].

Claim 17 is also rejected using the same justification provided for Claim 11 as they cite the same claim limitations.

As per Claim 13, Smyers in view of Dara-Abrams discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes a *user*

*selection of a period of time*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed *by each slave device* during the selected period of time.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal operational state changes), he does not expressly disclose the feature of the television (TV) receiver. The feature is disclosed by Dara-Abrams in a related endeavor.

Dara-Abrams discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for diagnosing consumer electronic devices (PCs, TVs, PVRs, STBs, DVRs, PDAs, game devices, etc.) [Abstract] [col 1, L14-22] [col 2, L35-36]. In one embodiment, when a problem with a consumer device owned by a user is identified, a diagnostic procedure is provided to control the diagnosis of the potentially faulty consumer electronic device by a testing consumer electronic device. In particular, Dara-Abrams discloses as part of his invention gateway device\_14 (e.g., PC, laptop, PDA, etc.), which may be coupled to a display device\_42, such as a television [col 3, L51-60].

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyer's invention with the feature of the television (TV) receiver, as disclosed by Dara-Abrams, for the motivation of providing a mechanism for diagnosing consumer electronic devices locally, thus eliminating a need to find a service center associated with the faulty device [col 1, L42-45].

Claim 13 is also rejected using the citations and reasoning provided above for claim 12 as the limitation of the history inquiry request received from the user including *a user selection of at least one slave device*, and the displayed operation history data including a list of operations or events performed *by each selected slave device* during a predetermined period of time, is disclosed by Smyers (e.g. monitoring of temperature readings by a temperature sensitive device every 30 minutes, monitoring of STB / VCR states performed every 5 minutes) [col 2, L23-47]

3. Claims 7, 14, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyers in view of Klosterman et al (hereinafter Klosterman), U.S. Patent Publication US 200/0092017A1.

As per Claim 7, Smyers in view of Klosterman discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the master device includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and

wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the television receiver is currently activated or not.



While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal operational state changes), he does not expressly disclose wherein the master device includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the master device is currently activated or not.

This limitation is taught by Klosterman in his invention relating to television systems, and in particular, to the interception of television programming signals tuned by a television and the replacement or overlay of said tuned television programming signals with alternative video and/or audio programming and/or with graphics and/or text [0002]. In particular, Klosterman discloses an audio blocking bit (ABB) or video blocking bit (VBB) wherein a user may activate an electronic program guide. The EPG checks the VBB of the channel table entry of the channel currently tuned, and in one embodiment, if the VBB channel is set "on" then the EPG display is adjusted to completely cover the screen, and the show being viewed or displayed is completely blocked out [0061] [Figs. 2a-b, 3, 4a-b]. It is noted here by the Examiner that Klosterman's disclosures allows television programming signals to be received or stored in the receiver device while the display of the signal is blocked from view or replaced with alternative graphics and/or text.

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention, with the feature of a master device that includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the master device is currently activated or not, as disclosed by Klosterman, for the motivation of blocking out undesired or unwanted television signal programs (i.e., commercials and advertisements) according to viewer preferences [0003-0006].

Claims 14 and 27 are also rejected using the same rationale for Claim 7 given that they are identical claims that differ only by statutory category.

4. Claims 8, 10, 24, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyers in view of Aizu et al (hereinafter Aizu), U.S. Patent US 6,838,978.

As per Claims 8 and 10, Smyers in view of Aizu notes the home network system of claim 1, wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal

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operational state changes), he does not expressly disclose wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems 1 (Aizu: Figure 1; Col 5, lines 38-42).

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In particular, Aizu discloses a microprocessor and a plurality of slave devices connected via a Power Line communication modem (i.e. Controller 1, which may be a PLC gateway for protocol conversion and for acquiring various kinds of appliance data *regularly* from appliances on the network [col 5, lines 38-42].

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention, with the feature of a home network system wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

Claim 10 is also rejected for the same reasons cited for Claim 8 given that they are identical claims that differ only by statutory category.

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As per Claim 30, Smyers in view of Aizu discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal operational state changes), he does not expressly wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem.

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In particular, Aizu discloses a microprocessor and a plurality of slave devices connected via a Power Line communication modem (i.e. Controller 1, which may be a PLC gateway for protocol conversion and for acquiring various kinds of appliance data *regularly* from appliances on the network [col 5, lines 38-42].

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention, with the feature of wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and

complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

5. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smyers in view of Aizu and in further view of Sitnik.

As per Claim 24, Smyers in view of Aizu and in further view of Sitnik discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of the television receiver on.

While Smyers discloses substantial features of the invention such as the home network system of claim 1 [Abstract] and displaying operation history data (Log of nodal operational state changes), he does not expressly disclose wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on.

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In particular, the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on (Aizu: Col 19, lines 44-53).

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention, with the feature of the method wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

Further, with regards to the claim while the combination of Smyers and Aizu disclose the above feature of method wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on, the combination does not expressly disclose the method wherein the master device is a "television set. The feature is disclosed by Sitnik in a related endeavor.

Sitnik discloses as his invention a method and apparatus for providing peer-to-peer communications between televisions wherein a query request is sent from any of the televisions to any other of the television. The query request is for information identifying content currently watched on the queried television including samples of the currently watched content [Abstract]. Specifically, Sitnik expressly discloses the recited feature of home network system wherein the master device is a "television receiver" [col 1, L25-36]. Sitnik teaches that "manufacturers are currently retrofitting every type of home appliance, from toasters to heating and cooling systems, for connection to an *in-home network*. Most of the systems are designed with *master/slave operability* in mind. For instance, many systems are designed wherein a master controller, such as a

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television (TV) is provided with the capability to recognize and control a slave device, such as a video cassette recorder (VCR). In this model, the master sends command and control information to the slave and the slave complies with the commands and sends status information back to the master.

It would thus be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Smyers' invention with the recited feature of the home network system comprising a television receiver that is operatively connected to at least one slave device for sending status request signals and receiving one or more response signals from the at least one slave device, for the motivation of sharing information about viewed audio visual content, specifically, and enhancing the primary leisure function of a TV, in general [col 1, L5-9 & col 2, L5-7].

### **Conclusion**

1. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

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shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Glenford Madamba whose telephone number is 571-272-7989. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Zarni Maung can be reached on 571-272-3939. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
**ZARNI MAUNG**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**